

Appl. No.: 10/781,500
Amdt. dated 08/08/2005
Reply to Office action of June 17, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated June 17, 2005. Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for a timely and thorough review of the above-referenced patent application. Claims 1–35 were previously pending in the application. Claims 1, 14, and 25 are rejected, but Claims 12 and 13 are allowed and Claims 2–11, 15–24, and 26–35 were confirmed to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have canceled Claims 1, 14, and 25 and amended Claims 2, 11, 15, 24, 26, and 35 to more clearly define the invention, as explained more fully below. It is respectfully submitted that in light of the arguments and claim amendments, the application is now in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Caputi '334 patent, the Farmer '151 patent, or the Chiang '235 patent

Claims 1, 14, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,433,334 to Caputi, Jr. ("the Caputi '334 patent"), U.S. Patent No. 6,085,151 to Farmer, et al ("the Farmer '151 patent"), or U.S. Patent No. 6,721,235 to Chiang, et al. ("the Chiang '235 patent"). The Office Action also objected to Claims 2–11, 15–24, and 26–35 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated Claims 2–11, 15–24, and 26–35 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have canceled Independent Claims 1, 14, and 25 and have amended Claims 2, 15, and 26 to recite the elements of former Claims 1, 14, and 25, respectively. In addition, Claims 11, 24, and 35, which directly depended from now canceled Claims 1, 14, and 25, respectively, have been rewritten in independent form to incorporate the elements of the claims from which they formerly depended. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 1, 14, and 25 is moot and the objection to Claims 2–11, 15–24, and 26–35 has been overcome and Claims 2–11, 15–24, and 26–35 are now in condition for allowance.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims of the present application are in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. Examiner Sotomayor is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

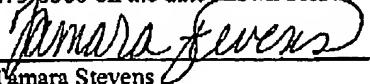


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CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the US Patent and Trademark Office at Fax No. (571) 273-8300 on the date shown below.



Tamara Stevens

Date

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